THRILLER COMICS Nº 4

ROBIN HOOD

64 PAGES OF THRILLING PICTURE ADVENTURE. 8D

DID YOU MISS THE FIRST TWO NUMBERS OF THIS THRILLING NEW SERIES?
IF SO, SEE YOUR NEWSAGENT WITHOUT DELAY, HE MAY STILL HAVE A FEW COPIES.

WHY NOT PLACE A REGULAR ORDER FOR *THRILLER COMICS* WITH YOUR NEWSAGENT?

ROBIN HOOD AND THE SHERIFF'S RANSOM

OYEZ! OYEZ! OYEZ!
BY THE ORDERS OF THE SHERIFF HIMSELF! BE IT KNOWN THAT A REWARD OF FIVE THOUSAND CROWNS WILL BE PAID FOR THE CAPTURE OF THE NOTORIOUS OUTLAW, ROBIN HOOD -
ROBIN HOOD AND THE OUTLAWS OF SHERWOOD FOREST HAVE BECOME A THORN IN THE SIDE OF THE HATED SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM. THEN ONE DAY, CITIZENS CROWD THE MARKET SQUARE OF NOTTINGHAM AS THE SCOWLING SHERIFF AND HIS MEN-AT-ARMS RIDE IN. THE SHERIFF'S HERALD UNROLLS A PARCHMENT SCROLL AND STARTS TO BAWL A PROCLAMATION!

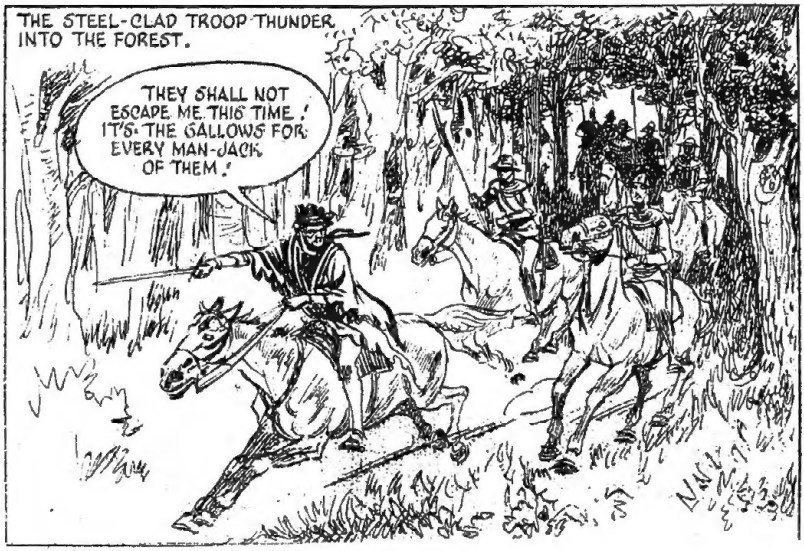
AN ARROW WHIZZES ACROSS THE SQUARE.
--- DEAD OR ALIVE --- MERCY! WHAT THE---
GOOD MORROW, SIR SHERIFF!
IT'S ROBIN HOOD!

THE SHERIFF GOES PURPLE WITH RAGE.
THE INSOLENT DOG! WITHIN THE VERY WALLS OF NOTTINGHAM ITSELF? DO SOMETHING, YOU FOOLS! GET HIM!
CROSSBOWS TWANG, HURLING A DEADLY SHOWER OF BOLTS AT THE DARING OUTLAW!
'TIS TIME WE WERE GONE, FIREFLY!

TO SHERWOOD FOREST! LET'S HOPE THE SHERIFF HAS TAKEN THE BAIT!
DUNDERHEADS! YOU'VE LET HIM ESCAPE! FOLLOW ME! WE'LL SWEEP THE FOREST OF THESE INSOLENT SCOUNDRELS!
BY MARS, THE SHERIFF GROWS WONDROUS BOLD! ANGER HATH MADE A MAN OF HIM!

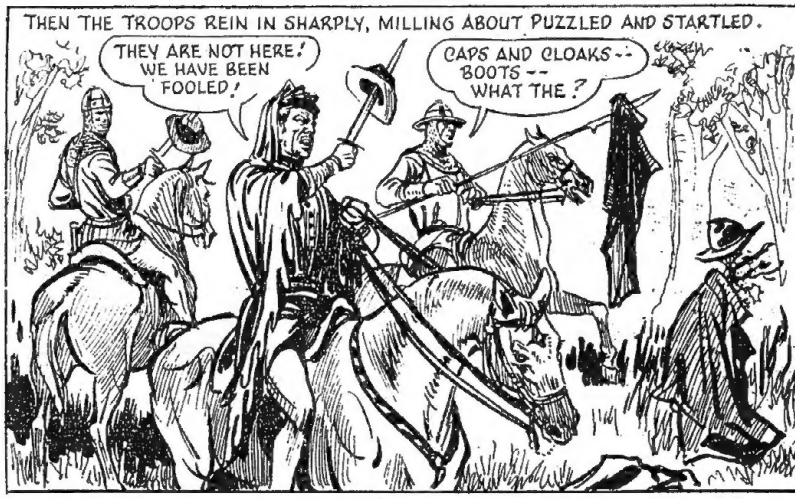
THE SHERIFF LEADS THE TROOP IN PURSUIT, THUNDERING OUT OF TOWN THROUGH THE OLD GATEWAY!
MEANWHILE, IN THE HEART OF SHERWOOD FOREST, THE OUTLAWS MAKE MERRY IN A CLEARING BENEATH ROBIN HOOD'S OAK, THE GIANT TREE WHERE ALL NEW OUTLAWS MUST TAKE THEIR OATH OF LOYALTY. AN ARROW FROM EACH OUTLAW'S BOW BRISTLES IN THE FOREST GIANT, A REMINDER OF HIS VOW.
'TIS ROBIN! HERE HE COMES! WHAT NEWS?
TO YOUR FEET! I HAVE DRAWN HIM THIS TIME! OUR PLAN GOES INTO ACTION!

PITY TO WASTE SUCH A NOBLE STEW, BUT FAITH, THIS IS THE DAY I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!
WORK FAST, MEN! HE IS CLOSE ON MY HEELS WITH A WHOLE TROOP OF MEN-AT-ARMS!


THE STEEL-CLAD TROOP THUNDER INTO THE FOREST.
THEY SHALL NOT ESCAPE ME THIS TIME! IT'S THE GALLOWS FOR EVERY MAN-JACK OF THEM!

THEN THE SHERIFF'S EYES GLEAM WITH TRIUMPH!
WE'VE CAUGHT THEM ON THE HOP! LOOK YONDER, SIR CAPTAIN!
MARRY, BUT YOU'RE RIGHT! THEY LIE ASLEEP!

CHARGE!


THEN THE TROOPS REIN IN SHARPLY, MILLING ABOUT PUZZLED AND STARTLED.
THEY ARE NOT HERE! WE HAVE BEEN FOOLED!
CAPS AND CLOAKS -- BOOTS -- WHAT THE?

THE BRANCHES PART, AND FROM THE TREES AROUND FLASHES A HAIL OF DEADLY ARROWS.
FIRE!
WE ARE ATTACKED!

AS THE MEN-AT-ARMS STAMPEDE INTO THE FOREST, ROBIN SWINGS DOWN FROM A TALL TREE.

THE SHERIFF IS SWEPT FROM HIS HORSE.

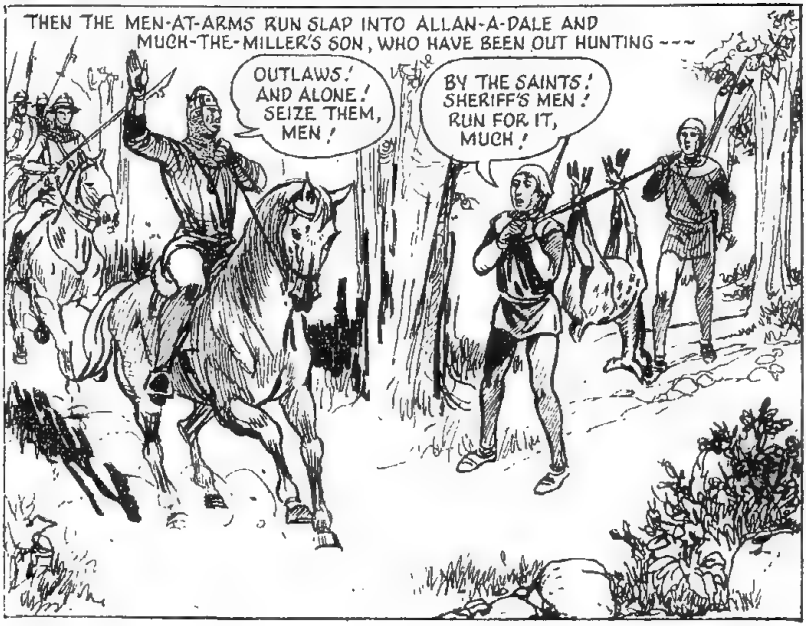
HELP! HELP! SAVE ME! SHOOT HIM!
THE SHERIFF! THEY HAVE CAPTURED HIM!
AS THE HORSEMEN BRING THEIR CROSS-BOWS TO THEIR SHOULDERS, LITTLE JOHN GIVES A ROAR AND SWINGS DOWN FROM HIS BRANCH!
THEY AIM AT ROBIN! OUT OF MY WAY!
FRIAR TUCK YELLS AS HE OVERBALANCES!
LOOK OUT, YOU BIG OAF! ~~ OH! I'M FALLING!
TAKE THAT!
UGH-- AAAGH!

FRIAR TUCK FALLS PLUMB ONTO THE SECOND MAN-AT-ARMS A SPLIT-SECOND LATER.
OOOF!
WELL DONE, FRIAR! HAH HAH HAH!
OUCH-- OOF! YOU--YOU AWKWARD LOUT--
THE OUTLAWS DROP FROM THE TREES, TO GATHER ABOUT ROBIN ---
SO WE HAVE CAUGHT THE BIRD AT LAST! HE VALUES ME AT FIVE THOUSAND CROWNS. I WONDER IF THE CITIZENS OF NOTTINGHAM WILL BE WILLING TO PAY FIVE THOUSAND FOR HIM!
YOU-- YOU DIRTY THIEF! ROBBER! LOWBORN DOG!

QUIET, YOU DOG! THE RANSOM MONEY WILL GO TO THE POOR PEOPLE OF THE FOREST, WHOM YOU'VE ROBBED AND PILLAGED, YOU MANGY CUR!
MEANWHILE, SNARLING AND HUMILIATED, THE FLEEING HORSEMEN NEAR THE COTTAGE OF OLD MEG O' THE FOREST --
ONE OF THOSE CURSED FORESTERS THAT HELP THE OUTLAWS! LET'S BURN THE PLACE DOWN!
AY! THAT'LL TEACH THEM A LESSON, CAPTAIN!
INSIDE THE COTTAGE, MAID MARION HAS JUST BROUGHT OLD MEG A GIFT--
HERE'S BUTTER AND EGGS FOR YOU, FROM ROBIN HOOD, OLD MEG!
GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS, MY DEAR. YOU'RE GOOD TO AN OLD WOMAN!
WHAT'S THAT! HORSEMEN IN SHERWOOD!
IT'S THE SHERIFF'S MEN! AND THEY'RE HALTING! THEY MEAN MISCHIEF!

THEY MUST NOT KNOW WHO YOU ARE, MY DEAR! I WILL PRETEND YOU ARE MY DAUGHTER! IF THEY KNEW YOU WERE MAID MARION, THEY'D DRAG YOU OFF TO A DUNGEON IN NOTTINGHAM CASTLE!
THEN THE DOOR CRASHES OPEN--
OUTSIDE, YOU OLD HAG! AND WHO IS THIS?
IT'S MY DAUGHTER--YOU WOULDN'T SEPARATE A MOTHER FROM HER ONLY DAUGHTER--
WE'LL SHOW YOU WHAT WE DO TO FRIENDS OF THESE CURSED OUTLAWS!
NO--NO! THEY'RE GOING TO BURN MY COTTAGE DOWN--

WELL DONE, MEN! LET US GO!
DON'T WORRY, MEG! ROBIN WILL NOT LET YOU GO HOMELESS! THEY SHALL PAY FOR THIS!


THEN THE MEN-AT-ARMS RUN SLAP INTO ALLAN-A-DALE AND MUCH-THE-MILLER'S SON, WHO HAVE BEEN OUT HUNTING ~~~
OUTLAWS! AND ALONE! SEIZE THEM, MEN!
BY THE SAINTS! SHERIFF'S MEN! RUN FOR IT, MUCH!

MAID MARION AND OLD MEG DASH INTO THE CLEARING ~~~

ROBIN -- THEY'VE CAPTURED ALLAN-A-DALE AND MUCH. THEY ARE TO DIE ON THE GALLOWS THIS AFTERNOON!
WHAT! THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT, THEN. WE MUST FORGET THE RANSOM, AND BARGAIN THE SHERIFF'S LIFE FOR THEIRS

NOT SO FAST, LITTLE JOHN! WE WILL SAVE THEM AND STILL COLLECT OUR RANSOM. EVEN IF THE MARKET SQUARE BE RINGED ABOUT WITH A THOUSAND MEN! I HAVE A PLAN-- LISTEN!
TALK, ROBIN. AND IGNORE THIS BIG JACKASS HERE.!

LATER THAT DAY, A WAGON DRAWS UP OUTSIDE THE GATES OF NOTTINGHAM---

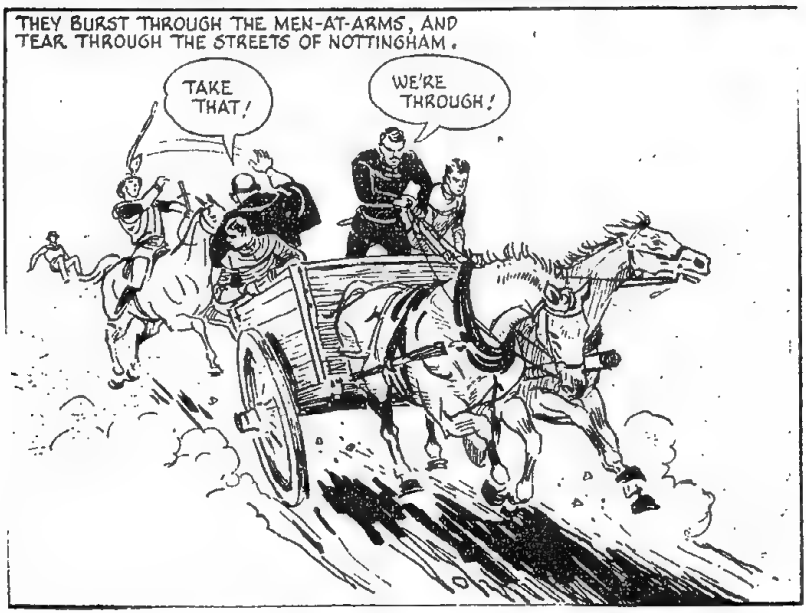
WHO GOES THERE! WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS?
THE EXECUTIONER, COME TO BEHEAD TWO TRAITOROUS OUTLAWS! OPEN UP, FELLOW! I HAVE BUSINESS IN NOTTINGHAM TO-DAY!

HO HO HO! FOUR AXES, FORSOOTH! YOU MAKE CERTAIN THAT NOTHING GOES WRONG, SIR EXECUTIONER!
I ALWAYS DO. IT IS A HABIT OF MINE--
COME ON, MY BEAUTIES--MUSTN'T KEEP THE SHERIFF WAITING!

THE CROWDS BOO AND HISS AS THE EXECUTIONER MOUNTS THE STEPS OF THE SCAFFOLD!
A NICE FRIENDLY CROWD, FATHER!
QUIET, YOU CURS, OR WE CLEAR THE MARKET PLACE!
THE CLOCK CHIMES THE HOUR OF THREE, AND A HUSH FALLS OVER THE MARKET SQUARE ---
'TIS NOT LIKE ROBIN HOOD TO LET HIS MEN DIE THUS!
WHAT CAN HE DO, AGAINST SO MANY ARMED MEN? HE HAS LEFT IT TOO LATE! THE POOR FELLOWS ARE DOOMED --

THEN THE EXECUTIONER FLINGS OFF HIS MASK, AND SLASHES THE PRISONER'S FREE.
MUCH! ALLAN! GRAB AN AXE APIECE! TO THE WAGON!
WE'LL SHOW THESE SONS OF SATAN!
BACK, YOU DOGS, OR I'LL CUT YOU TO MINCEMEAT!
'TIS ROBIN HOOD! STOP THEM! CUT THEM DOWN!

A GREAT ROAR GOES UP FROM THE CROWD.
ROBIN HOOD! HURRAH! A RESCUE! A RESCUE!
TO THE NORTH GATE, BY THE CASTLE! LITTLE JOHN AWAITS US THERE!


THEY BURST THROUGH THE MEN-AT-ARMS, AND TEAR THROUGH THE STREETS OF NOTTINGHAM.
TAKE THAT!
WE'RE THROUGH!

THE PORTCULLIS IS CLOSED! WE'RE TRAPPED!
FEAR NOT! WE HAVE YET A CARD TO PLAY, ALLAN!

HO THERE! LITTLE JOHN!
I AM HERE, ROBIN!

THE GUARDS FALL BACK IN DISMAY.
HOLD! WAIT! LOOK UP THERE! HE HAS THE SHERIFF IN IN HIS POWER!

OPEN THE GATES, YOU DOGS! LET THE WAGON GO UNHARMED, OR I DASH THE SHERIFF TO HIS DOOM!
DO AS HE SAYS, YOU FOOLS! HE WILL KILL ME RAISE THE PORTCULLIS! LET THEM GO!

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD SCOWLS AND OBEYS.
NOT SO FAST, SIR CAPTAIN! THERE IS A LITTLE MATTER OF FIVE THOUSAND CROWNS OWING TO ME YET!
ALL RIGHT, THEN! GET YOU GONE, OUTLAW DOGS!

YOU INSOLENT ROGUE. MOCK US, WILL YOU, BY HEAVEN?
'TIS NO MOCK! 'TIS A RANSOM FOR THE LIFE OF THE SHERIFF! BETTER ASK HIM YOURSELF!

GIVE IT HIM! GIVE HIM THE MONEY, YOU DOLT! WOULD YOU HAVE ME DASHED TO PIECES! DO AS THE SCOUNDREL SAYS ~
HA HA! WELL SPOKEN, SHERIFF!
THE BAGS OF GOLD ARE BROUGHT FROM THE CASTLE AND STACKED INTO THE WAGON ~~
THAT'S THE LOT, ROBIN!
GOOD! HO THERE! LITTLE JOHN! LET'S GO!

AS THE WAGON RACES OUT ONTO THE HIGHWAY BELOW--LITTLE JOHN TURNS AND HURLS THE SHERIFF THROUGH A CASTLE WINDOW.
BACK TO YOUR KENNEL, LITTLE MAN.
AAAGHH--OWWOOH!
FAITH! I COULD SHOOT BETTER WITH MY HANDS TIED BEHIND MY BACK! HERE I COME, ROBIN!
JUMP!

TO THE GREENWOOD, HO!
OOF! BLOCKHEAD! DID YOU HAVE TO --OOGH-- LAND ON ME!
LATER, IN THE HEART OF SHERWOOD FOREST ---
HERE, MEG O' THE FOREST! AND YOU, OLD LUKE--
GOD BLESS ROBIN HOOD! THE FRIEND OF THE POOR!
The End

ROBIN HOOD and the PHANTOM KNIGHT

ON THE DEATH OF KINDLY SIR ELDRED OF RONVALE, HIS LANDS ARE SEIZED BY A CRUEL AND POWERFUL KNIGHT — GUTHRUM THE BLACK. ONE DAY GUTHRUM DESCENDS ON THE COTTAGE OF LOBB, THE FLETCHER, TO DEMAND PAYMENT OF HEAVY TAXES.
IT HAPPENS THAT ROBIN HOOD HAS JUST BROUGHT IN A FINE FAT BUCK FOR LOBB, WHO IS A GOOD FRIEND OF THE OUTLAW'S.
OUR GRATEFUL THANKS FOR THIS FINE BUCK, GOOD ROBIN.
BEWARE, ROBIN! HERE COMETH BLACK GUTHRUM AND SOME OF HIS ROGUES!
M

GUTHRUM IS SEEKING LOBB HIMSELF.
THREE TIMES HAVE I SENT MY STEWARD TO COLLECT THE DUES YOU OWE ME, ROGUE! AND NOW I — GUTHRUM THE BLACK — HAVE COME MYSELF. YIELD UP THY MISERABLE GUINEAS, OR YOU SHALL SUFFER!
YOUR DEMANDS ARE THRICE THE AMOUNT SIR ELDRED LEVIED. I HAVE NOT PAID BECAUSE I CANNOT!

WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD, THE GRIM-FACED GUTHRUM WALKS HIS HORSE AWAY. THEN HE TURNS AND RAPS OUT AN ORDER TO HIS MEN.
BURN THE COTTAGE TO THE GROUND!
WITH THEE, GOOD LOBB! 'TIS PITY I LEFT MY BOW TO CARRY THE BUCK — BUT WE'LL TEACH THESE ROGUES SOMETHING OF QUARTERSTAFF PLAY!

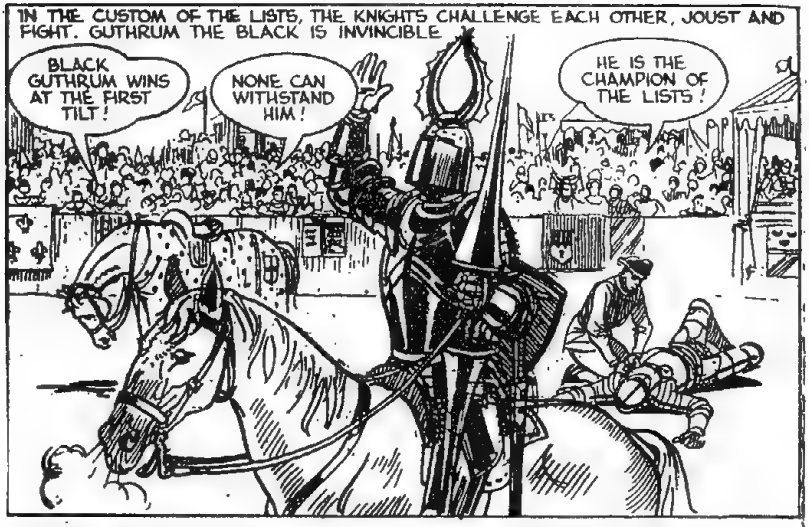
WHILE LOBB'S WIFE HURRIES TO THE SAFETY OF THE FOREST WITH HER CHILDREN, ROBIN AND LOBB FIGHT GRIMLY.
'TIS MANY A MOON SINCE I CRACKED SUCH A GOODLY NUMBER OF RASCALLY PATES!
AYE, ROBIN, BUT THEY ARE TOO MANY FOR US!

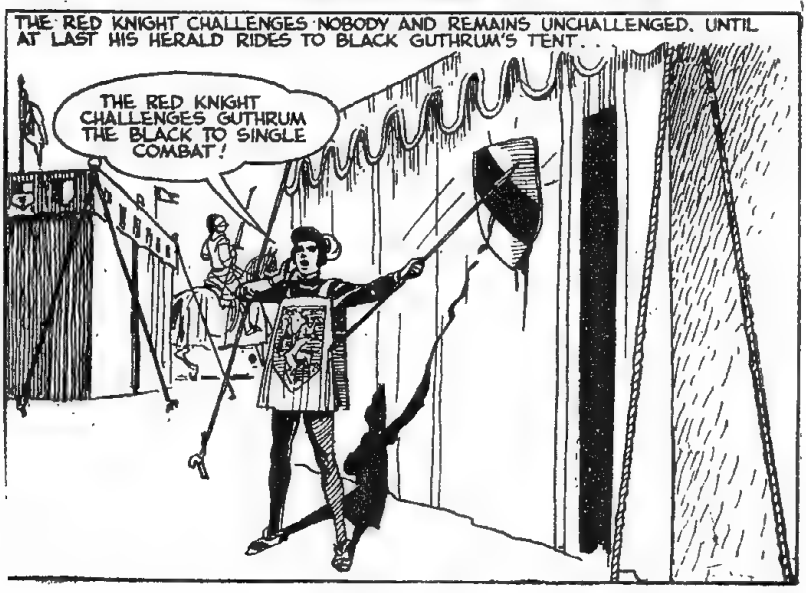
BESET BY SO MANY ROBIN AND LOBB CANNOT PREVENT SOME OF THE MEN BREAKING THROUGH TO THE COTTAGE.
THE KNAVE WITH LOBB IS ROBIN HOOD. TAKE YOUR SWORD TO HIM, SIR GUTHRUM, AND SLAY HIM!
PAH! I'LL NOT SOIL MY KNIGHTLY STEEL ON A SCURVY OUTLAW!

AS THE COTTAGE BECOMES A MASS OF FLAMES, ROBIN SOUNDS A NOTE ON HIS HORN THAT WILL BRING SIX SCORE OUTLAWS HURRYING TO HIS AID.

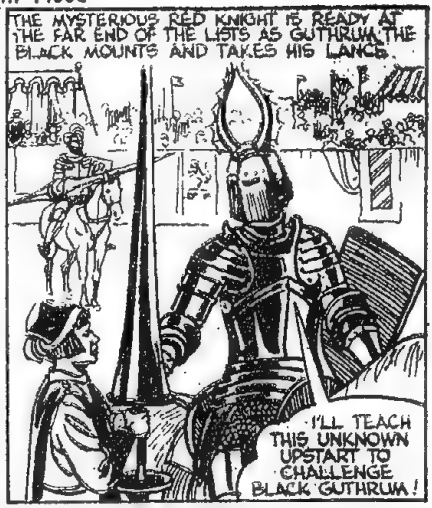
AWAY MEN! THIS WILL BE A LESSON TO ALL MY TENANTS! THEY WILL KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO DEFY BLACK GUTHRUM!
THE CRUEL DEED COMPLETED, GUTHRUM AND HIS MEN MAKE OFF, MANY HAVE TO BE CARRIED AWAY, BUT THAT IS LITTLE COMFORT TO LOBB.
COME LOBB! 'TIS NO TIME TO GRIEVE. LET US SAVE WHAT WE CAN. THE WELL IS FULL, AND MY MEN ARE SPEEDING FROM THE GREENWOOD TO OUR HELP!
IN A VERY SHORT TIME THE CLEARING IS ALIVE WITH GREEN-CLAD OUTLAWS, ALL WORKING DESPERATELY TO ROBIN'S ORDERS.
THE FLAMES ARE NIGH BEATEN, BUT THEY HAVE DONE THEIR WORK!
AYE, WE HAVE SAVED THE WALLS, BUT TIS ALMOST GUTTED WITHIN.

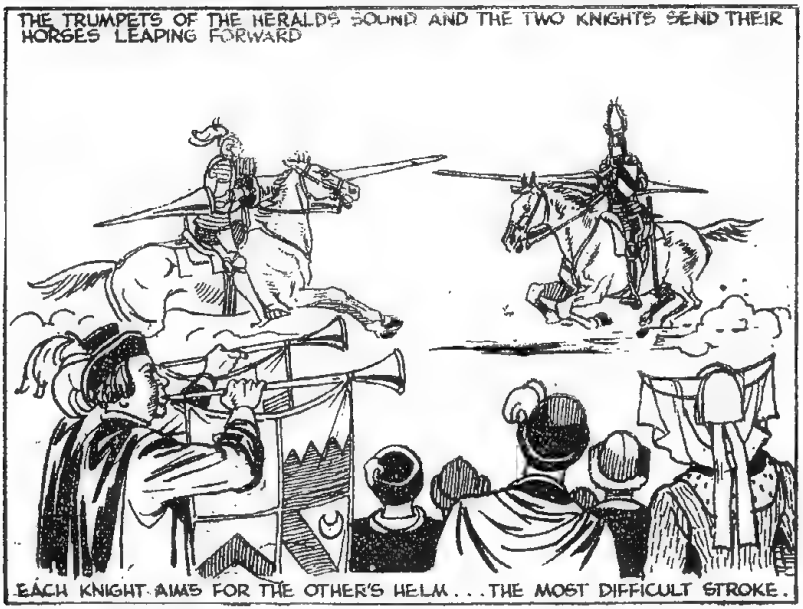
WHEN AT LAST THE STRUGGLE IS OVER . . .
GRIEVE NOT, LOBB. SOMETHING HAS BEEN SAVED, AND ROBIN WILL SET HIS MEN TO MAKING YOUR COTTAGE AS FINE AND NEW WITHIN AS EVER IT WAS.
ROBIN IS A STOUT FRIEND, BUT IT IS USELESS TO REBUILD MY COTTAGE, GUTHRUM THE BLACK, WILL COME AGAIN!
LOBB SPEAKS TRUE! FIRST WE MUST DEAL WITH THIS BLACK-HEARTED KNIGHT WHO HAS SEIZED THESE LANDS! TILL THEN I WILL FIND A HOME FOR LOBB AND HIS FAMILY WITH GOOD FRIENDS ON THE FAR SIDE OF SHERWOOD.
A F&W DAYS LATER, ROBIN LEARNS THAT GUTHRUM THE BLACK IS HOLDING A GREAT TOURNAMENT, AND THAT KNIGHTS FROM FAR AND NEAR ARE GATHERING TO JOUST IN THE LISTS.
ON THE DAY OF THE TOURNAMENT, A KNIGHT IN RED ARMOUR, ATTENDED BY ONLY A HANDFUL OF MEN, RIDES INTO THE COURTYARD OF GUTHRUM'S CASTLE.
I'LL BE WARY, MUCH! IF I CAN BRING THE SHAME OF DEFEAT BY AN OUTLAW TO PROUD GUTHRUM, IT WILL DRIVE HIM FAR FROM THESE PARTS!
KEEP THY VISOR CLOSED, ROBIN. REMEMBER BLACK GUTHRUM HAS SEEN THY FACE!

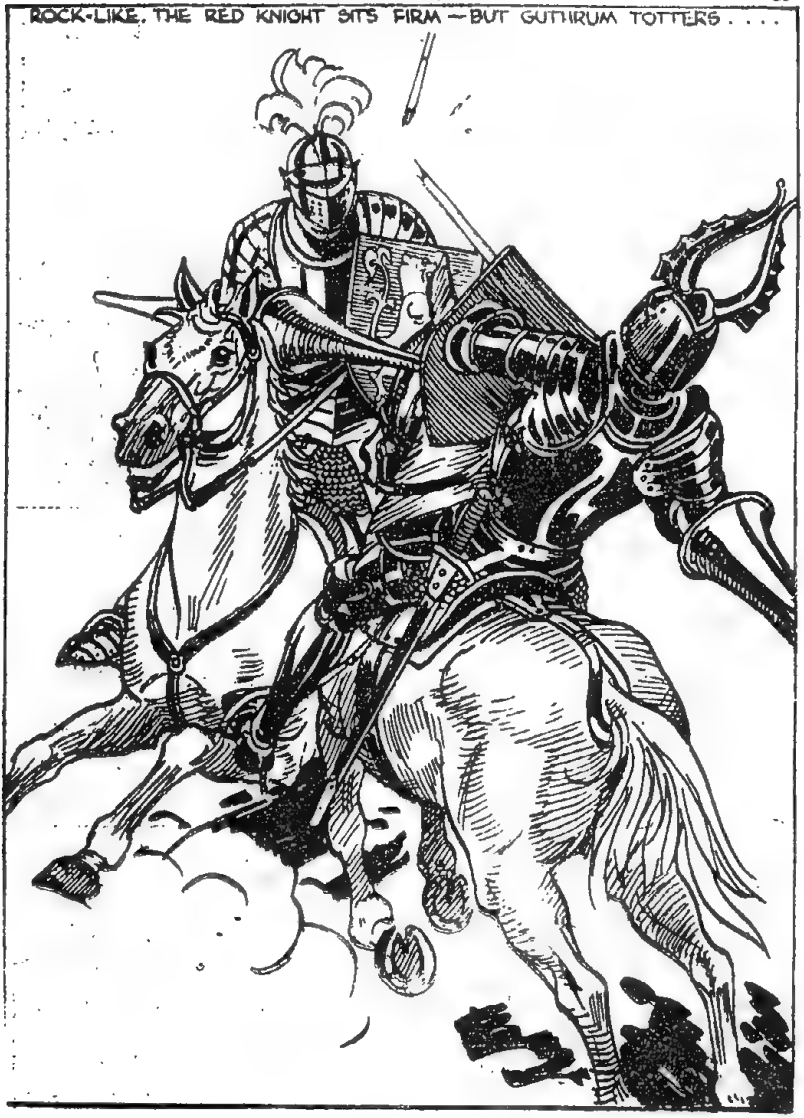

IN THE CUSTOM OF THE LISTS, THE KNIGHTS CHALLENGE EACH OTHER, JOUST AND FIGHT. GUTHRUM THE BLACK IS INVINCIBLE.
BLACK GUTHRUM WINS AT THE FIRST TILT!
NONE CAN WITHSTAND HIM!
HE IS THE CHAMPION OF THE LISTS!

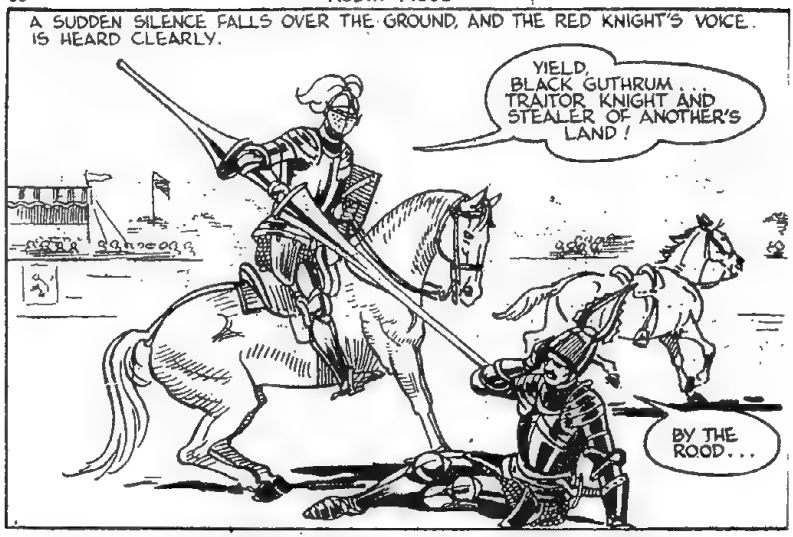

THE RED KNIGHT CHALLENGES NOBODY AND REMAINS UNCHALLENGED. UNTIL AT LAST HIS HERALD RIDES TO BLACK GUTHRUM'S TENT...
THE RED KNIGHT CHALLENGES GUTHRUM THE BLACK TO SINGLE COMBAT!

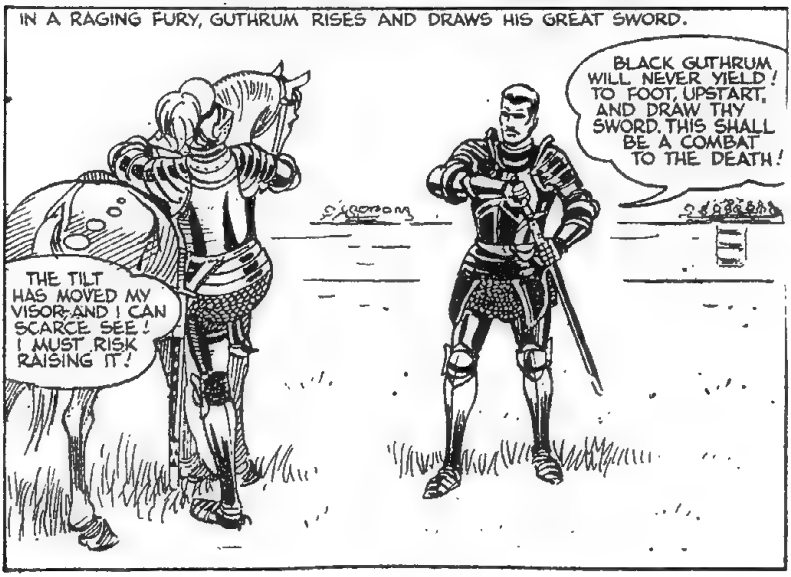
WHO IS THIS STRANGE RED KNIGHT?
I KNOW NOT, MY LORD. ALL THE PEOPLE ARE ASKING WHO HE IS BUT NONE CAN ANSWER.


THE MYSTERIOUS RED KNIGHT IS READY AT THE FAR END OF THE LISTS AS GUTHRUM THE BLACK MOUNTS AND TAKES HIS LANCE.
I'LL TEACH THIS UNKNOWN UPSTART TO CHALLENGE BLACK GUTHRUM!

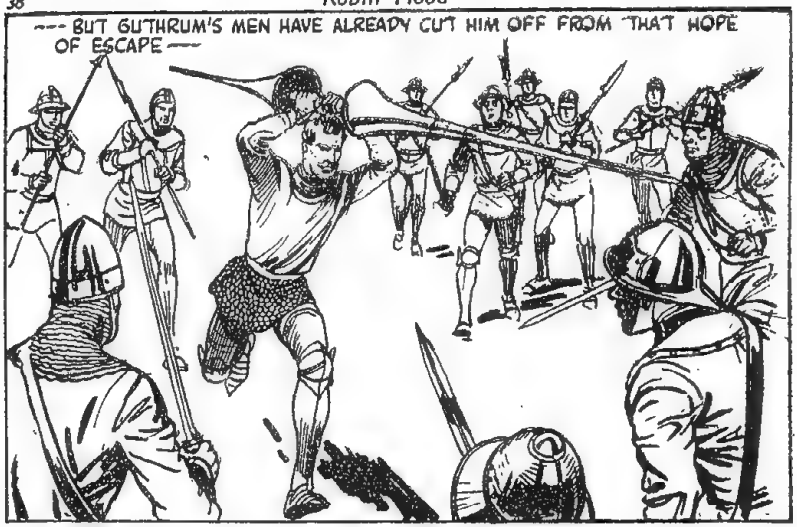

THE TRUMPETS OF THE HERALDS SOUND AND THE TWO KNIGHTS SEND THEIR HORSES LEAPING FORWARD
EACH KNIGHT AIMS FOR THE OTHER'S HELM . . . THE MOST DIFFICULT STROKE.


ROCK-LIKE, THE RED KNIGHT SITS FIRM — BUT GUTHRUM TOTTERS . . . .


A SUDDEN SILENCE FALLS OVER THE GROUND, AND THE RED KNIGHT'S VOICE IS HEARD CLEARLY.
YIELD, BLACK GUTHRUM . . . TRAITOR KNIGHT AND STEALER OF ANOTHER'S LAND!
BY THE ROOD . . .

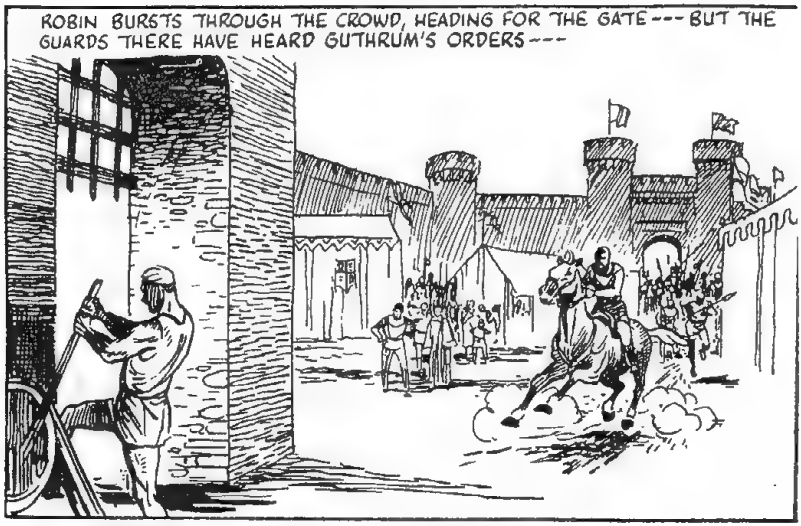

IN A RAGING FURY, GUTHRUM RISES AND DRAWS HIS GREAT SWORD.
BLACK GUTHRUM WILL NEVER YIELD! TO FOOT, UPSTART, AND DRAW THY SWORD. THIS SHALL BE A COMBAT TO THE DEATH!
THE TILT HAS MOVED MY VISOR AND I CAN SCARCE SEE! I MUST RISK RAISING IT!

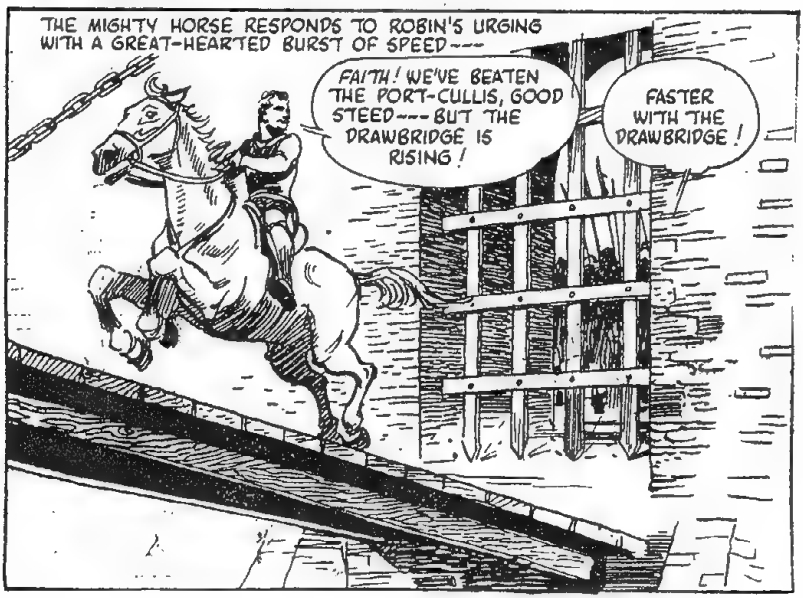
THE LONG SWORDS FLASH, AND AS THE RED KNIGHT MAKES A PARRY, THE HILTS LOCK TOGETHER FOR A SECOND---
BY MY HALIDOM! I KNOW THEE NOW! THOU'RT ROBIN HOOD!
GUTHRUM DISENGAGES HIS BLADE AND SPRINGS BACK--
HO THERE! THIS IS THAT ROGUE ROBIN HOOD! SEIZE HIM AND LET HIM BE HANGED! HE IS NOT WORTHY TO BE KILLED BY THE BLADE OF A TRUE KNIGHT!
WITH A SWIFT WRENCH, ROBIN THROWS ASIDE THE CUMBERSOME HELM AND TURNS TOWARDS HIS HORSE---

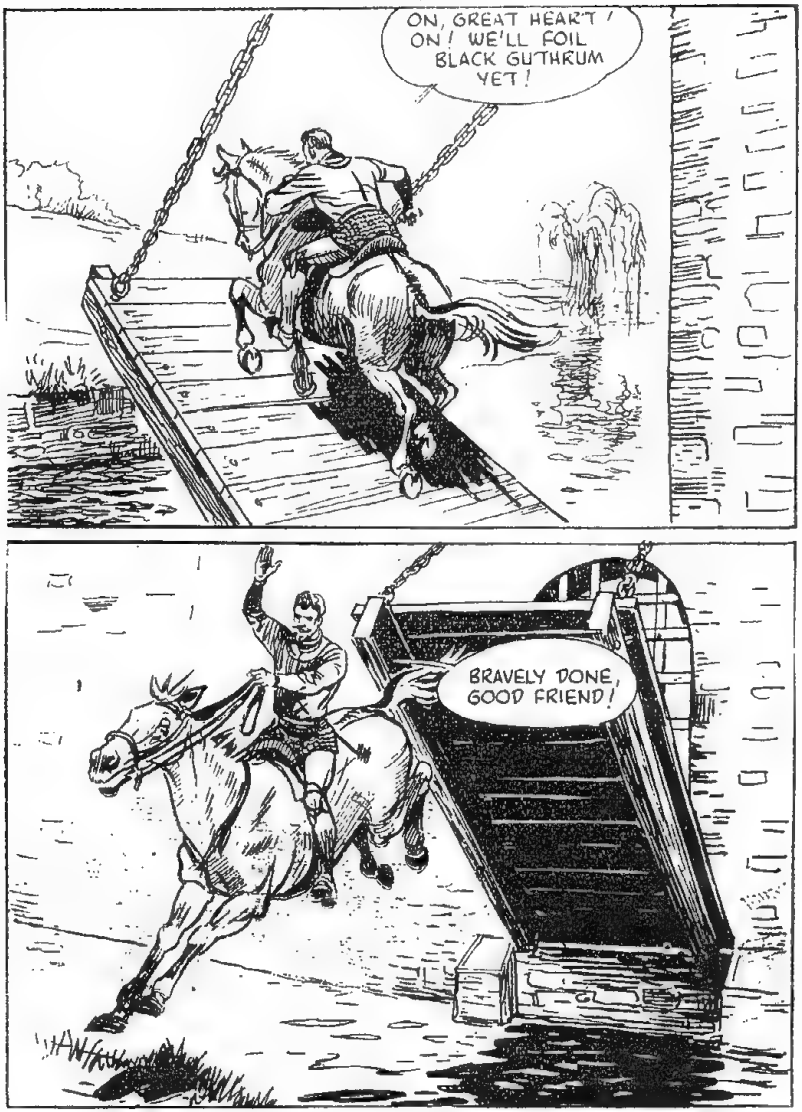

--- BUT GUTHRUM'S MEN HAVE ALREADY CUT HIM OFF FROM THAT HOPE OF ESCAPE ---

ROBIN SNATCHES UP HIS FALLEN LANCE AND RUNS TO MEET HIS WOULD-BE CAPTORS ---

ROBIN COMES DOWN CLEANLY IN THE SADDLE, AND SPURS AWAY BEFORE THE BEWILDERED MEN CAN RECOVER THEIR WITS ~~~~
FOOLS! DROP THE PORT-CULLIS AND RAISE THE DRAWBRIDGE!


ROBIN BURSTS THROUGH THE CROWD, HEADING FOR THE GATE--- BUT THE GUARDS THERE HAVE HEARD GUTHRUM'S ORDERS---


THE MIGHTY HORSE RESPONDS TO ROBIN'S URGING WITH A GREAT-HEARTED BURST OF SPEED---
FAITH! WE'VE BEATEN THE PORT-CULLIS, GOOD STEED--- BUT THE DRAWBRIDGE IS RISING!
FASTER WITH THE DRAWBRIDGE!

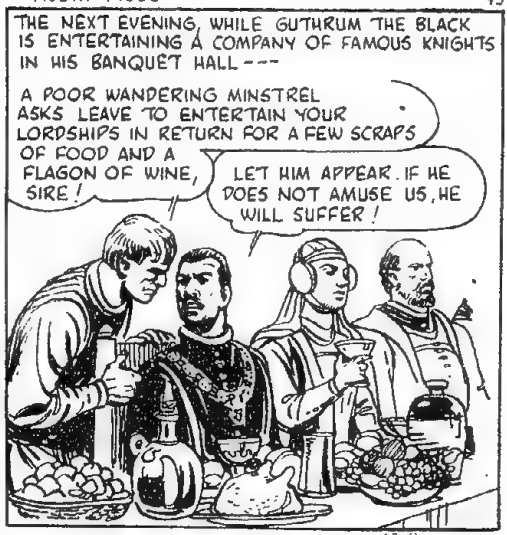

ON, GREAT HEART! ON! WE'LL FOIL BLACK GUTHRUM YET!
BRAVELY DONE, GOOD FRIEND!

WHILE ROBIN SPEEDS TO SAFETY, LITTLE JOHN TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE TURMOIL TO ENSURE THAT THE REST OF THE OUTLAWS ARE NOT TRAPPED---

UP PORT-CULLIS! LOWER THE DRAWBRIDGE! AFTER THE KNAVE WITH ALL SPEED!
THEY'LL NEVER CATCH ROBIN! BUT WE'LL MINGLE WITH THE PURSUIT AND THEN SLIP AWAY INTO THE GREENWOOD!

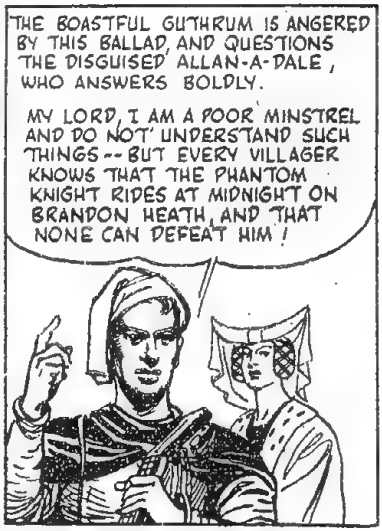
LITTLE JOHN AND HIS FRIENDS ESCAPE IN THE HUE AND CRY, TO REJOIN ROBIN LATER IN THE HEART OF SHERWOOD FOREST. THAT EVENING, WHILE THE OUTLAW BAND SUPS AND LISTENS TO THE SONGS OF ALLAN-A-DALE, ROBIN SUDDENLY THINKS OF A DARING SCHEME---
TELL ALLAN-A-DALE I WOULD SPEAK TO HIM, GOOD FRIAR. I HAVE A PLAN TO BRING THE BOASTFUL GUTHRUM TO BATTLE!
AYE, ROBIN, BUT REMEMBER, HIS KNIGHTLY STEEL IS TOO GRAND TO USE IN BATTLE AGAINST AN OUTLAW!

FIRST YOU MUST COMPOSE A BALLAD ABOUT A STORY I WILL TELL THEE, ALLAN-A-DALE. THEN YOU MUST GO TO GUTHRUM'S CASTLE DISGUISED AS A WANDERING MINSTREL. NOW, MARK YE MY COMMANDS CAREFULLY, GOOD ALLAN---
ROBIN EXPLAINS HIS PLAN, AND ALLAN-A-DALE SETS TO WORK COMPOSING THE BALLAD.


THE NEXT EVENING, WHILE GUTHRUM THE BLACK IS ENTERTAINING A COMPANY OF FAMOUS KNIGHTS IN HIS BANQUET HALL---
A POOR WANDERING MINSTREL ASKS LEAVE TO ENTERTAIN YOUR LORDSHIPS IN RETURN FOR A FEW SCRAPS OF FOOD AND A FLAGON OF WINE, SIRE!
LET HIM APPEAR. IF HE DOES NOT AMUSE US, HE WILL SUFFER!

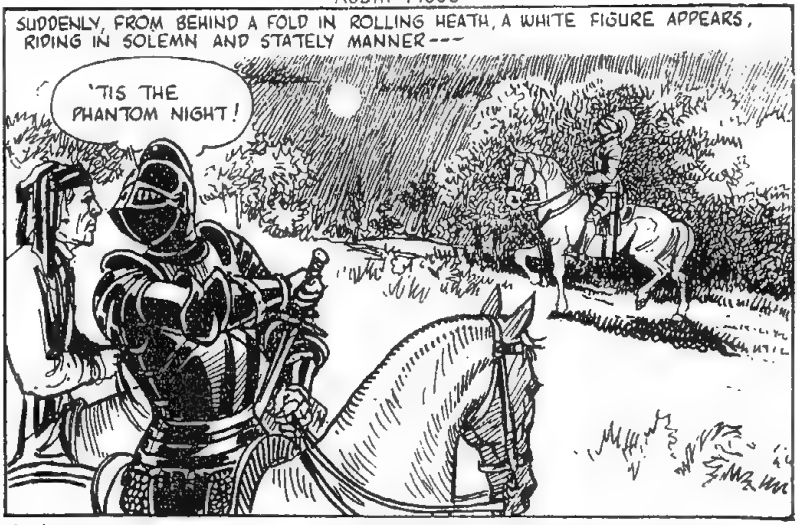
BUT THE KNIGHTLY COMPANY IS MUCH TAKEN WITH THE MINSTREL'S FINE VOICE AND TUNEFUL BALLADS. ONE BALLAD IN PARTICULAR STIRS GUTHRUM'S VANITY---
FAUGH! HERE IS NAUGHT BUT A PRETTY LEGEND!
AND THE FAMOUS LORDS FROM FAR AND WIDE, AT NIGHT TO BRANDON HEATH DID RIDE, WITH LANCE AND SWORD AND MACE TO FIGHT THE DREAD, UNCONQUERED PHANTOM KNIGHT!

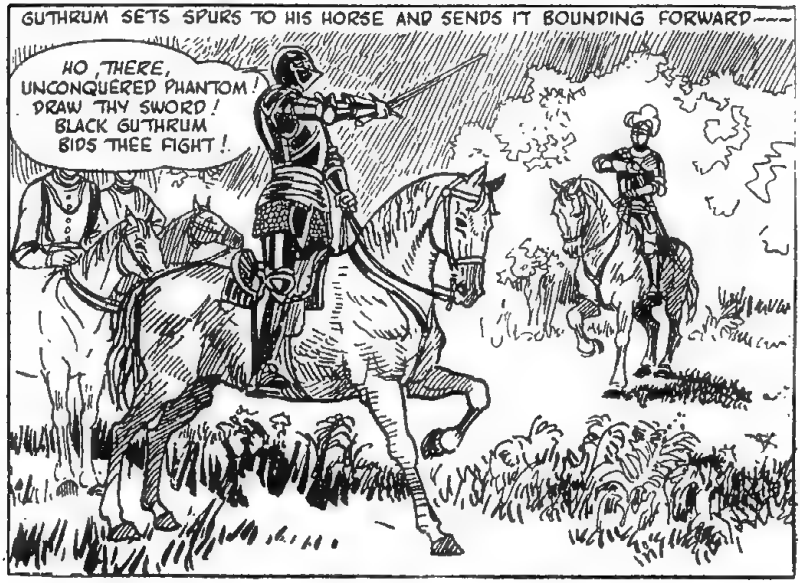
---BUT PRINCE AND BARON, KNIGHT AND LORD, ALL FELL BEFORE THE PHANTOM'S SWORD, HE RIDES UNCONQUERED YET!
BRAVO!
WELL SUNG, MINSTREL!
A STIRRING BALLAD!
HO! COME HITHER, MINSTREL!


THE BOASTFUL GUTHRUM IS ANGERED BY THIS BALLAD AND QUESTIONS THE DISGUISED ALLAN-A-DALE, WHO ANSWERS BOLDLY.
MY LORD, I AM A POOR MINSTREL AND DO NOT UNDERSTAND SUCH THINGS -- BUT EVERY VILLAGER KNOWS THAT THE PHANTOM KNIGHT RIDES AT MIDNIGHT ON BRANDON HEATH, AND THAT NONE CAN DEFEAT HIM!

BY THE ROOD! BLACK GUTHRUM OWNS NO MAN AS HIS MASTER! WE'LL TEST THIS FOOLISH FABLE. I RIDE TO BRANDON HEATH TONIGHT, AND YOU, MY LORDS, MAY RIDE WITH ME! PHANTOM OR NO, HE'LL BOW THE KNEE TO BLACK GUTHRUM BEFORE THIS NIGHT IS OUT!

AND SO, AS MIDNIGHT APPROACHES, BLACK GUTHRUM AND HIS GUESTS RIDE OUT THROUGH THE MOONLIGHT TO BRANDON HEATH---
AND NOW, MILORDS, WE SHALL SEE IF THE MINSTREL SPAKE TRUE. 'TIS NEAR THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT!


SUDDENLY, FROM BEHIND A FOLD IN ROLLING HEATH, A WHITE FIGURE APPEARS, RIDING IN SOLEMN AND STATELY MANNER---
'TIS THE PHANTOM NIGHT!


GUTHRUM SETS SPURS TO HIS HORSE AND SENDS IT BOUNDING FORWARD---
HO, THERE, UNCONQUERED PHANTOM! DRAW THY SWORD! BLACK GUTHRUM BIDS THEE FIGHT!

THE PHANTOM KNIGHT SPURS TO MEET GUTHRUM'S FIERCE CHARGE, AND THE WATCHERS HEAR THE CLASH OF BLADES~~~
GUTHRUM THE BLACK WAS EVER A STRUTTING BOASTER. 'TIS MY HOPE THE PHANTOM KNIGHT WILL DEFEAT HIM!
GUTHRUM, VICTOR OF A HUNDRED TOURNEYS, ATTACKS WITH FIERCE CONFIDENCE, JEERING AND TAUNTING THE WHILE~~~
HA! CANST DO NO BETTER THAN DEFEND THYSELF, PHANTOM?
~~~BUT THE PHANTOM KNIGHT CLEVERLY HOLDS OFF THE ATTACK, AND SPEAKS NO WORD~~~
AS GUTHRUM SWINGS BACK HIS SWORD FOR A TWO-HANDED STROKE, THE PHANTOM MAKES A LIGHTNING THRUST ~~~~~
~~~

GUTHRUM CRASHES TO THE GROUND, AND AT ONCE THE PHANTOM KNIGHT DISMOUNTS TO CONTINUE THE BATTLE ON FOOT---
A LUCKY STROKE, BY THE ROOD! I'LL CLEAVE THY HELM FOR THEE NOW, SIR PHANTOM!
AGAIN THEY CLASH TOGETHER, BUT NOW IT IS THE PHANTOM KNIGHT WHO ATTACKS FIERCELY, HIS SWORD STRIKING SPARKS FROM GUTHRUM'S ARMOUR---
WITH BRILLIANT SWORDPLAY, THE PHANTOM'S POINT FLICKERS IN THE CHINKS OF GUTHRUM'S ARMOUR, SLICING THROUGH THE STRAPS THAT HOLD IT.

TERROR FILLS BLACK GUTHRUM'S HEART AS THE PHANTOM KNIGHT TOYS WITH HIM--SUDDENLY GUTHRUM'S NERVE SNAPS, AND THE AWED WATCHERS HEAR HIM SHRIEK FOR MERCY AS HE FALLS TO HIS KNEES---
HARK YE! GUTHRUM IS BEGGING FOR MERCY LIKE A CRAVEN!
AND THEN, FROM THE PHANTOM KNIGHT'S HELM, BOOMS A HOLLOW VOICE---
BASE KNIGHT! IF YOU SEEK MERCY, CONFESS THAT YOU HAVE SEIZED YOUR LANDS BY FORCE! CONFESS THAT YOU HAVE CRUELLY OPPRESSED ALL THOSE WHO LIVE ON THESE LANDS
GUTHRUM CROAKS OUT A WHIMPERING CONFESSION, AND THE WATCHING KNIGHTS PRESS NEARER IN MINGLED AWE AND CURIOSITY. THE PHANTOM RAISES HIS VISOR---
SEE, NOBLE KNIGHTS! YOU HAVE HEARD GUTHRUM'S CONFESSION, AND NOW YOU SEE THAT HIS CONQUEROR IS ROBIN HOOD--- AN OUTLAW GUTHRUM CONSIDERED NOT WORTHY OF HIS STEEL!

GUTHRUM, MAD WITH RAGE, SCREAMS OUT WILD COMMANDS TO THE KNIGHTS--
A HOOD! A HOOD! 'TWAS A FAIR FIGHT! BLACK GUTHRUM HAS CONFESSED!
ATTACK! SLAY THE OUTLAW.

BUT AS ROBIN'S MEN GATHER BEHIND THEIR MASTER, SIR MELLORS OF THAX, A GREAT AND HONOURED KNIGHT, RAISES HIS HAND--
THEN MY TASK IS DONE. I THANK THEE, COURTEOUS KNIGHT!
WE HAVE NO QUARREL WITH ONE WHO HAS FOUGHT WITH SUCH KNIGHTLY COURAGE, ROBIN HOOD! GO IN PEACE, BOLD OUTLAW! THE TALE OF BLACK GUTHRUM'S CONFESSION, AND HOW IT CAME TO BE MADE, SHALL BE TOLD THROUGHOUT THE LAND!

AND SO ROBIN HOOD RETURNS TO THE GREENWOOD, WHILE BLACK GUTHRUM RIDES AWAY—A BEATEN MAN, KNOWING THAT HE IS HENCEFORWARD AN OUTCAST FROM THE CHIVALROUS ORDER OF KNIGHTHOOD

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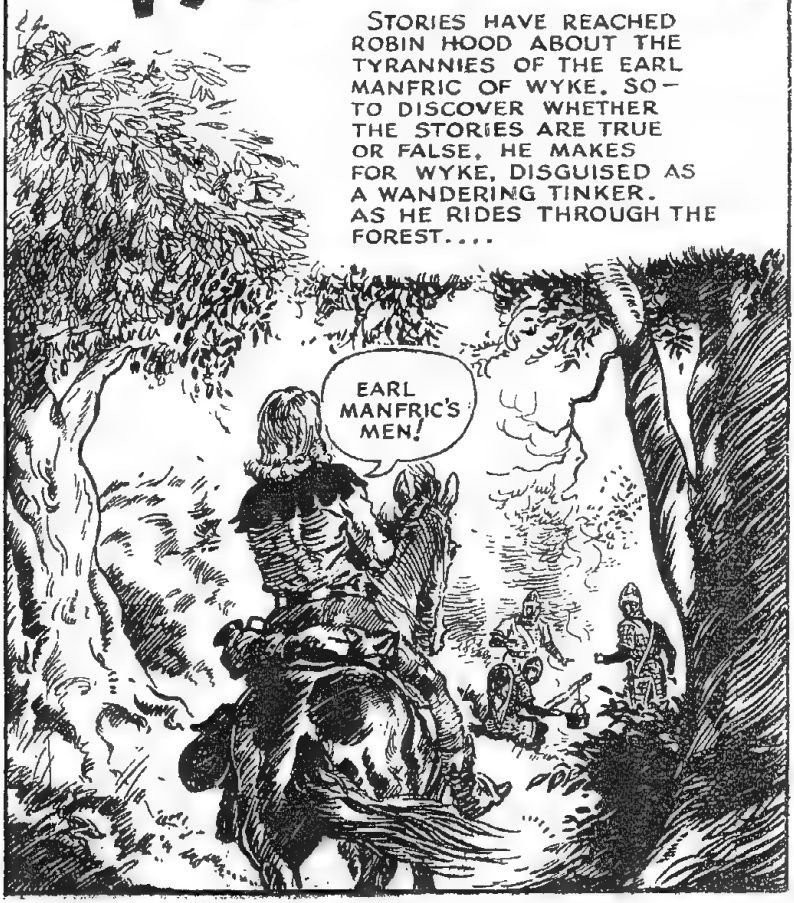
ROBIN HOOD and the TYRANT EARL

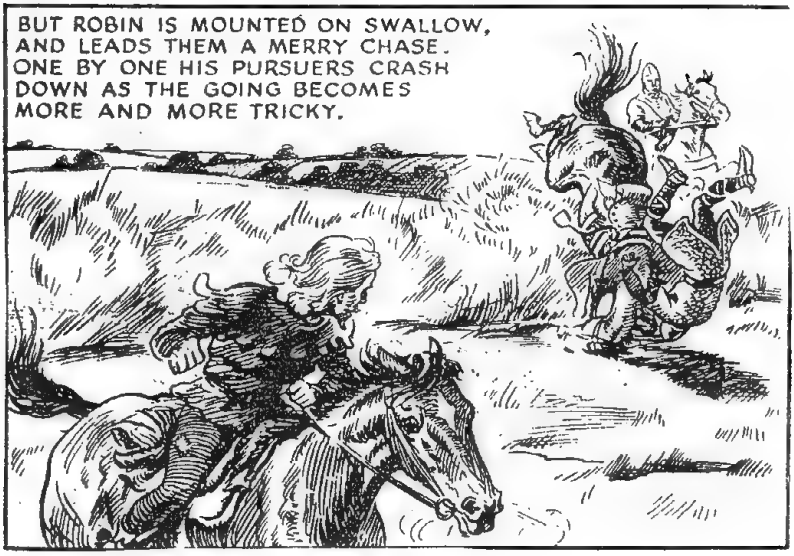

STORIES HAVE REACHED ROBIN HOOD ABOUT THE TYRANNIES OF THE EARL MANFRIC OF WYKE. SO— TO DISCOVER WHETHER THE STORIES ARE TRUE OR FALSE, HE MAKES FOR WYKE, DISGUISED AS A WANDERING TINKER. AS HE RIDES THROUGH THE FOREST....
EARL MANFRIC'S MEN!

WHO ARE YOU, FELLOW? KNOW YOU NOT THAT THIS IS EARL MANFRIC'S LAND?
GOOD SIR – I AM ONLY A POOR SAXON TINKER

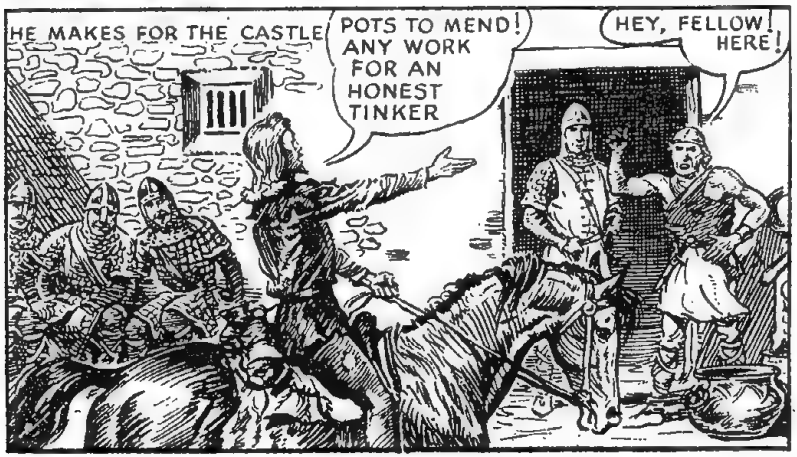
AT FIRST THE SOLDIER SEEMS TO BELIEVE ROBIN---- THEN----
A POOR TINKER? MOUNTED ON SO FINE A HORSE?

ROBIN KNOWS THE GAME IS UP---- HE WHIRLS INTO ACTION----

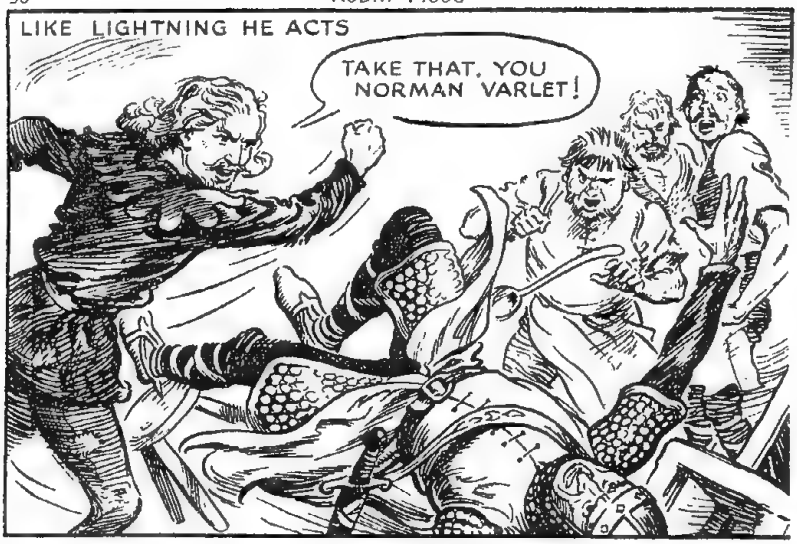
AFTER HIM! AFTER THE SAXON RENEGADE!


BUT ROBIN IS MOUNTED ON SWALLOW, AND LEADS THEM A MERRY CHASE. ONE BY ONE HIS PURSUERS CRASH DOWN AS THE GOING BECOMES MORE AND MORE TRICKY.

SO AT LAST HE RIDES INTO WYKE – ALONE
THERE HE FINDS A TOWN OF SWAGGERING SOLDIERS AND HUNGRY PEOPLE.


HE MAKES FOR THE CASTLE
POTS TO MEND! ANY WORK FOR AN HONEST TINKER
HEY, FELLOW! HERE!

SO ROBIN PLIES HIS TINKERS TRADE, AND LISTENS. MEANWHILE THE CAPTAIN OF THE FOREST PATROL ARRIVES.
I HEAR THE OUTLAW ROBIN HOOD HAS BEEN SEEN RIDING THIS WAY.
THE OUTLAW ROBIN HOOD! OF COURSE! THERE HE IS — THE SAXON WHO RODE THE FINE HORSE!
ROBIN SENSES THE TENSE ATMOSPHERE AND THEN HE HEARS THE SCRAPE OF A DRAWN SWORD!


LIKE LIGHTNING HE ACTS
TAKE THAT, YOU NORMAN VARLET!

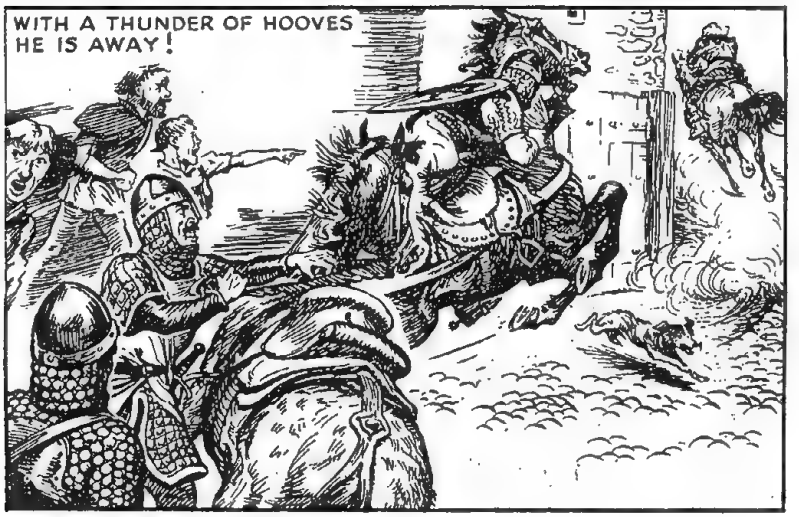
IN A TRICE HE IS OVERPOWERED BY SHEER WEIGHT OF NUMBERS.
IT IS THE OUTLAW, ROBIN HOOD! TAKE HIM TO EARL MANFRIC!

BY MY SWORD! WHAT IS THIS COMMOTION?
MY LORD, IT IS THE OUTLAW, ROBIN HOOD!
SO YOU ARE ROBIN HOOD! I HAVE LONG WANTED A WORD WITH YOU!

I COULD USE THE SERVICES OF A VALLIANT WARRIOR LIKE YOURSELF— JOIN ME WITH YOUR MERRY BAND, AND YOU WILL GROW RICH! I GIVE YOU TILL SUNDOWN TO CONSIDER.
MAYBE HE WILL AGREE— AND IF HE DOESN'T, MAYBE HIS BAND WILL COME TO RESCUE HIM. IN EITHER CASE WE WILL WIN THE REWARD KING JOHN OFFERS FOR THE CAPTURE OF THE WHOLE SCURVY PACK!
ROBIN DOES NOT RESIST HIS CAPTORS AND THEY HURL HIM INTO A STABLE----

HERE HE FINDS AN OLD FRIEND
SWALLOW!
AT THAT MOMENT HE HEARS SOUNDS OUTSIDE.
ROBIN LISTENS — AND KNOWS IT IS NOW OR NEVER!
THIS ROBIN IS A CRAFTY ROGUE! EARL MANFRIC BIDS ME CHAIN HIM, LEST HE ESCAPE!

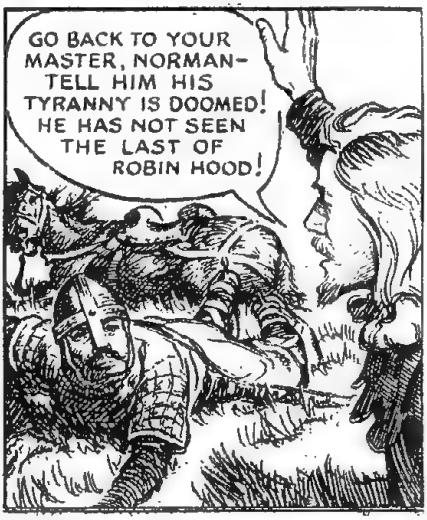
BUT AS THE SMITH OPENS THE DOOR
ROBIN HURTLES OUT!


WITH A THUNDER OF HOOVES
HE IS AWAY!

'TIS HO FOR THE GREENWOOD! THEY'LL NEVER CATCH SWALLOW!
BY MY FAITH! THE BRIDGE IS DOWN! SWALLOW! FAIL ME NOT!

BUT ONLY ONE OF HIS PURSUERS MANAGES THE LEAP!

ONCE AGAIN, ROBIN LEADS THE CHASE OVER WILD ROUGH COUNTRY, HOPING THAT THE NORMAN WILL STUMBLE AND FALL.
HIS HORSE IS NOT SO SURE OF FOOT AS SWALLOW – HE'LL STUMBLE SOON – SURE AS FATE!


GO BACK TO YOUR MASTER, NORMAN – TELL HIM HIS TYRANNY IS DOOMED! HE HAS NOT SEEN THE LAST OF ROBIN HOOD!

MIRTH IN THE MIDDLE AGES
I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE - YOU'RE NOT TO USE THE PORTCULLIS FOR CRACKING NUTS!
LUV YOU
OH GOODY! A LOVE LETTER FROM SIR CYRIL FITZKEWER!
MY ARROW CATCHES IN A THREAD AND BANG GOES THREE WEEKS OF AUNTIE'S KNITTING!
I SAY! IT'S RATHER RISKY, SITTING THERE ISN'T IT?
IT'S THE ONLY SAFE PLACE WHEN ALRE ODDSHOTTE IS SHOOTING
HE'LL NEVER BE A GOOD ARCHER WITH EARS LIKE THOSE!

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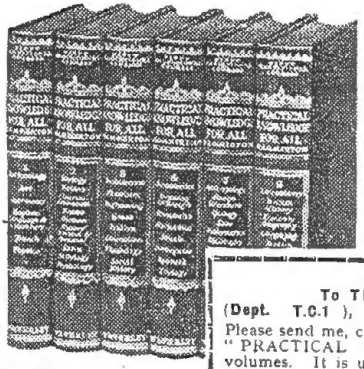

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